March 31st, 2017

Dear Fantastico,

Hey! It’s been a long time since I heard from you. I was thinking about you, so I decided to write you a letter. In this day and time, it is important to keep in contact. It is so much craziness with the missing black girls, then Trump being president and trying to create all of these RIDICULOUS laws and whatnot. Even the blatant racism and discrimination is getting out of hand.

We always focused on black and white race war right now. It’s so predominant in so many aspect of our lives. So much so, sometimes it’s hard to remember there are other races. Or even remember that all blacks aren’t the same, and believe it or not, neither are whites. But this race war thing ain’t nothing new. Groups have been fighting ever since the beginning of creation seems like. Think about it. Remember the Allies and Axis in WWII. The colonists even had various African tribes pitted against each other when they came over drawing lines and borders putting people together that didn’t want any parts of each. Would be remised if we didn’t remember key race wars that forever shaped history with the colonists and native Americans and then the Nazis vs. Jews. What I was oblivious about was the tension between the Jewish people and the African-American community of Crown Heights in Brooklyn, New York.

I am taking a class called Voices of Diversity this semester at school. We read different plays that explore various aspects of diversity including race, gender, and even sexuality. It has been quite an entertaining experience of reading the plays. I am use to the regular book and watching a play here or there. But, never are the ever about real issues that are worth discussing and addressing. Well, this week, the assignment included watching a few clips from the play Fires in the Mirror. It follows a very unique format than we are use to seeing with the play only include one actress and that actress is reenacting the personal encounters of people she met in Crown Heights. I know what you’re thinking, ‘well how did she pull off playing all these people alone’. These people never interact throughout the piece, but rather. Anna Deavere Smith, actress and director, gives them monologues.

A brief summary of the story would be that there was a bit of tension between the Jews and the African- American community. This was a nonviolent tension that just included discrimination and dislike toward one another. The nonviolent tendency was broken when there were two deaths. There was a 7-year-old black boy killed by a Jewish man in a car and then a Jewish student stabbed to death by a mob of black men. After these deaths, which occurred on the same day, there were riots. There was so much discord! I am not sure what came of this. My interest has been peaked and I will be investigating further. I will keep you updated. Hope to hear back from you soon!

Love you much,

Mikaela